

**Q.** Are you concerned that there may be some reluctance in parts of the Balkans to implement a peace?

**The President.** All I can tell you is the cease-fire has been in place for a couple of months. It has basically held. There have been many things that have happened in the last 3 years. I'm sure many people have different feelings, but we believe these leaders have acted in good faith and will continue to do so. And if they do, we think we'll be successful.

**Q.** Do you think the Congress has given you a whole-hearted vote of support on this, or how do you—how do you rate—

**The President.** I'll tell you how I read the vote. I think Congress—first of all, both Houses decided not to cut off funds and to support the troops. And the Senate, in what could only be characterized as an overwhelming bipartisan vote, gave its support to the mission subject to conditions with which the administration agrees. So I was quite pleased with where the Congress came out yesterday compared to where they were just a month ago. And again, I think that is in part due to the fact that these leaders have been willing to meet with the Members of the Congress who have traveled to the area in the last couple of weeks. And I think they have seen the people and their desire for peace. And they have heard from these leaders about their desire for peace and their determination. And I feel that we made a lot of progress. And I think now that the time for debate is over; the time for decision is at hand. And I believe the United States and the United States Congress will rally behind our troops in this mission.

**Q.** Are you satisfied with the pace of the deployment, Mr. President? Are you satisfied that the deployment is proceeding as fast as it can at this point?

**The President.** Yes, you know, it's the winter. We have snow. We have first one thing then another, but I think we're going forward in good faith and in an appropriate way.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:22 a.m. at the Ambassador's residence, prior to meeting with President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, and President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia.

A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## **Remarks at the Signing Ceremony for the Balkan Peace Agreement in Paris**

*December 14, 1995*

President Chirac, President Izetbegovic, President Tudjman, President Milosevic, Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, Secretary General Solana, High Representative Bildt, Prime Minister Filali, Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, Prime Minister Major, Prime Minister Gonzalez, Chancellor Kohl: Let me begin, on behalf of the people of the United States, by thanking all of those whose labor and wisdom helped to keep hope alive during the long, dark years of war, the humanitarian relief workers, the United Nations forces from Europe and beyond. Had it not been for their dedication and their sacrifice, the toll of the war in Bosnia would have been even greater.

And I thank those whose work helped make this moment of peace possible, beginning with our host, Prime Minister Chirac, for his vigor and determination; Prime Minister Major, who was a full partner in the development of the rapid reaction force and our NATO cooperation; and our friend, Chancellor Kohl, who has taken so many of the refugees and who now is sending German troops beyond his border in this historic common endeavor. I thank the leaders of the strong NATO and the determined negotiating team of Russians, Europeans, and Americans.

All of you have brought us to this bright new day, when Bosnia turns from the horror of war to the promise of peace. President Izetbegovic, President Tudjman, President Milosevic, by making peace you have answered the call of your people. You have heard them say, "Stop the war. End the suffering. Give our children the blessings of a normal life."

In this chorus for peace today we also hear the hallowed voices of the victims, the children whose playgrounds were shelled in the killing fields, the young girls brutalized by rape, the men shot down in mass graves,

those who starved in the camps, those who died in battle, the millions taken from their homes and torn from their families. Even from beyond the grave there are victims singing the song of peace today. May their voices be in our minds and our hearts forever.

In Dayton, these three Balkan leaders made the fateful choice for peace. Today, Mr. Presidents, you have bound yourselves to peace. But tomorrow you must turn the pages of this agreement into a real-life future of hope for those who have survived this horrible war. At your request, the United States and more than 25 other nations will send you our most precious resource, the men and women of our Armed Forces. Their mission, to allow the Bosnian people to emerge from a nightmare of fear into a new day of security, according to terms you have approved in a manner that is evenhanded and fair to all.

The international community will work with you to change the face of Bosnia: to meet human needs; to repair and to rebuild; to reunite children with their families and refugees with their homes; to oversee democratic elections, advance human rights, and call to account those accused of war crimes.

We can do all these things, but we cannot guarantee the future of Bosnia. No one outside can guarantee that Muslims, Croats, and Serbs in Bosnia will come together and stay together as free citizens in a united country sharing a common destiny. Only the Bosnian people can do that.

I know the losses have been staggering, the scars are deep. We feel even today that the wounds have not healed. But Bosnia must find a way, with God's grace, to lay down the hatreds, to give up the revenge, to go forward together. That is the road—indeed, that is the only road—to the future.

We see from Northern Ireland to the Middle East, from South Africa to Haiti, people turning from hatred to hope. Here in Europe countries that for centuries fought now work together for peace. Soon the Bosnian people will see for themselves the awesome potential of people to turn from conflict to cooperation. In just a few days troops from all over Europe and North America and elsewhere; troops from Great Britain, France and Germany; troops from Greece and Turkey; troops from Poland and Lithuania; and

troops from the United States and Russia, former enemies, now friends will answer the same call and share the same responsibilities to achieve the same goal, a lasting peace in Bosnia where enemies can become friends.

Why would they do this? Because their hearts are broken by the suffering and the slaughter; because their minds recoil at the prospect of needless spreading war in the heart of Europe. But they—we—do so in the face of skeptics who say the people of the Balkans cannot escape their bloody past, that Balkan hearts are too hard for peace.

But let us remember this war did violence not only to Bosnia's people but also to Bosnia's history. For Bosnia once found unity in its diversity. Generations of Muslims, Orthodox, Catholics, and Jews lived side by side, and enriched the world by their example. They built schools and libraries and wondrous places of worship. Part of the population laid down their tools on Friday, part on Saturday, and part on Sunday. But their lives were woven together by marriage and culture, work, a common language, and a shared pride in a place that then they all called home. Now, if that past is any guide, this peace can take hold. And if the people of Bosnia want a decent future for their children, this peace must take hold.

Here in this City of Light, at this moment of hope, let us recall how this century, marked by so much progress and too much bloodshed, witness to humanity's best and humanity's worst, how this century began in Bosnia. At the dawn of the century, when gunfire in Sarajevo sparked the first of our two World Wars, the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Gray, said these words: "The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our lifetimes."

But they were lit again, by an extraordinary generation of Europeans and Americans. The torch of freedom they carried now shines more brightly than ever before on every continent. That torch can shine on Bosnia again, but first it must warm the hearts of the Bosnian people.

So I say to all the people of the Balkans on behalf of all of us who would come to see this peace take hold: You have seen what war has wrought. You know what peace can

bring. Seize this chance and make it work. You can do nothing to erase the past, but you can do everything to build the future. Do not let your children down.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:50 p.m. in the Salon des Fetes at the Elysee Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Jacques Chirac of France, U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, NATO Secretary General Juan Solana, High Representative of the Balkan peace conference Carl Bildt, Prime Minister Abdellatif Filali of Morocco, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia, Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez of Spain, and Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany.

### **Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Citizens Medals**

*December 15, 1995*

**The President.** Good afternoon. Congressman Davis, Secretary Perry, General Shalikashvili, Deputy Secretary Talbott, distinguished friends: Let me say it is a great honor to welcome the Frasure family, the Kruzel family, the Drew family here today.

Yesterday in Paris I watched the Presidents of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia sign an agreement that turns their troubled region from war to peace. Then on behalf of our Nation, I witnessed the agreement.

I witnessed it also in a more personal sense on behalf of three great Americans who could not be there: Bob Frasure, Joe Kruzel, and Nelson Drew. For without their efforts there would have been no agreement in Dayton, and no signing in Paris. The shells would still be falling in Sarajevo.

When Bob, Joe, and Nelson died on Mount Igman on August the 19th, they were serving in the greatest of all missions, working for peace and freedom. How I wish they could know that their efforts were destined to be crowned with success. I think they do.

They knew their mission was dangerous. They talked about the risks the night before they set out for Sarajevo. Just a few days earlier they had tried to get in by helicopter, but were forced back by bad weather. But because of who they were, they never hesi-

tated, and the next morning they set out again.

To the family and friends of these three good and brave men, let me say again, as I have said before, we will never forget them. Their sacrifice reminds us of the tragedy they sought to relieve and reinforces the urgency of the search for a solution. They worked together as a team, but each had unique strengths.

Bob Frasure was a career diplomat who found the most difficult assignments, or perhaps it would be better to say they found him. From Angola to Ethiopia, to Estonia, and of course, to Bosnia, he helped to write some of the most dramatic chapters in the history of modern American foreign policy, yet he never sought the limelight for himself. As Secretary Christopher has said, he was a man of great accomplishment but little visible ego. His ingenuity and skill were matched by exceptional wit. His telegrams were so well written and compelling that they instantly became the talk of the State Department. His warmth touched countless colleagues and his judgment and resourcefulness countless lives.

Joe Kruzel was also a man with an apparently endless sense of humor. Over a three-decade career of service to our Nation, he retained also his idealism about our goals, while leavening it with a healthy dose of realism about the foibles of any large bureaucratic effort.

One of his colleagues remarked that while others were focused on day-to-day events, Joe's eyes were always on the horizon. He saw that an undivided democratic Europe was within reach, and he led the Pentagon's efforts in reaching out to the East to make that dream a reality. All of us, including myself and Bill Perry, valued his sage and firm advice. He did not mince words, and we all listened.

Nelson Drew, who served on my own staff, was a rare combination of remarkable soldier, respected scholar, profound strategic thinker, and a fine human being: born to a military family, achieving an exceptional military career, but he made peace his calling. I remember meeting him for the very first time in my office this past July just after I had finished a call with Prime Minister Major. I